



**Professional Learning Package:
Implementing Unit Starters**



**Module 1:
Preparing to Teach with
Unit Starters**

Learning Session 2


Module 1 Learning Sessions	
Session	Guiding Questions
1 ✓	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What is a Unit Starter? Why teach with Unit Starters? What resources are included in the Unit Starter? How do Unit Starters support standards-based instruction?
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How are concepts and understandings organized in the Unit Starter?
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How are concepts and understandings supported by the Unit Starter's texts, tasks, and question sequences?
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> How can I prepare to teach with the Unit Starter?



Professional Learning Package

Group Norms

- Be fully present.
- Actively participate.
- Embrace collaboration.
- Keep students at the center.



TN

Department of

Education

Professional Learning Package

Revisiting Session 1: Learning to Application

- What additional insights or reactions did you have as you read through your Unit Starter?

TN

Department of

Education

Professional Learning Package

Learning Session 2

- Guiding questions:
 - How are concepts and understandings organized in the Unit Starter?
 - What are universal concepts and unit concepts?
 - What are enduring understandings and essential questions?
 - What are disciplinary understandings and guiding questions?

TN

Department of

Education

Professional Learning Package

TN

How are concepts and understandings organized in the Unit Starter?

Literacy Unit Design Framework

FRAMEWORK FOR TEACHING LITERACY IN TENNESSEE

INTEGRATION OF STANDARDS

The Tennessee Academic Standards should be integrated throughout the unit design. Teachers should select concepts based on knowledge requirements contained in the grade level content standards. Then teachers should select specific ELA standards once texts and tasks are chosen to support students' reading comprehension and completion of daily and end of unit tasks.

Concept(s) Anchored in TN Academic Standards

Enduring Understanding(s) & Essential Questions

Text Selection

End of Unit Tasks

Lesson Sequence

Daily Tasks

STUDENT NEEDS

Students should always be at the heart of instructional decision making. Teachers should consider what standards, instructional strategies, and supports are needed to ensure that all students meet grade-level expectations.

Designing units is not a completely linear process. Teachers should continually think about the integration of standards and student needs as they plan units.

Concepts as the Foundation of Unit Design

FRAMEWORK FOR TEACHING LITERACY IN TENNESSEE

INTEGRATION OF STANDARDS

The Tennessee Academic Standards should be integrated throughout the unit design. Teachers should select concepts based on knowledge requirements contained in the grade level content standards. Then teachers should select specific ELA standards once texts and tasks are chosen to support students' reading comprehension and completion of daily and end of unit tasks.

★ Concept(s) Anchored in TN Academic Standards

★ Enduring Understanding(s) & Essential Questions

Text Selection

End of Unit Tasks

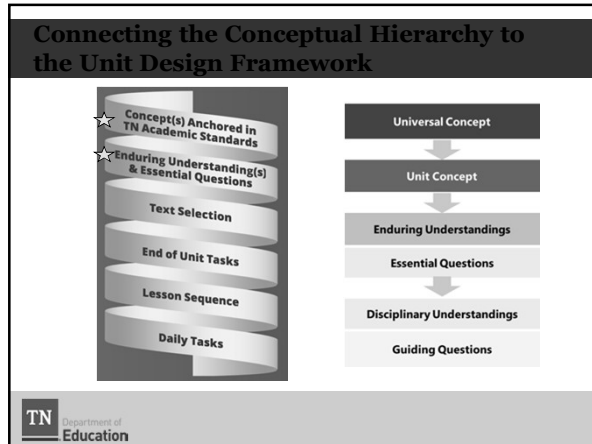
Lesson Sequence

Daily Tasks

STUDENT NEEDS

Students should always be at the heart of instructional decision making. Teachers should consider what standards, instructional strategies, and supports are needed to ensure that all students meet grade-level expectations.

Designing units is not a completely linear process. Teachers should continually think about the integration of standards and student needs as they plan units.



Comparing First Grade Tasks

Example #1
 Complete the pages in the "My Space Book." On each of the following pages, write at least two facts you learned from the unit:

- The Earth
- The Sun
- The Stars
- The Moon

Example #2
 With a partner, create a poster that shows how the sky looks different at different times of the day. Your poster should include drawings and captions related to day and night on Earth, the phases of the moon, and the sun and stars.

What kind of knowledge do these tasks require?

TN Department of Education | Professional Learning Package

Comparing First Grade Tasks

Example #3
 You are an astronomer working for U.S. Space and Rocket Center. You have been asked to create a student-friendly brochure that you will share with students during a school field trip that explains (1) observable patterns in the day and night sky, (2) the seasons that impact Earth, and (3) the phases of the moon. Use illustrations and descriptions to explain these observable patterns. Your brochure should include:

- a front cover that illustrates and names the topic of the brochure;
- a section that illustrates and describes observable patterns from the day and night sky and explains why we observe those patterns;
- a section that illustrates and describes the pattern in Earth's seasons and explains why changes in season occur; and
- a section that illustrates and describes phases of the moon and explains why we observe those patterns.

Be sure to:

- provide some sense of closure;
- use details from the texts we have read; and
- use vocabulary words from the word display in our unit.

What kind of knowledge does this task require?

TN Department of Education | Professional Learning Package

Universal Concept

```

graph TD
    UC[Universal Concept] --> UC2[Unit Concept]
    UC2 --> EU[Enduring Understandings]
    EU --> EQ[Essential Questions]
    EQ --> DU[Disciplinary Understandings]
    DU --> GQ[Guiding Questions]
  
```

Universal Concept:

A concept that bridges all disciplinary and grade-level boundaries.

This concept provides educators and students with an organizational framework for connecting knowledge across disciplines into a coherent view of the world.

Example: Patterns

TN

Department of
Education

Professional Learning Package

Adapted from McTighe, J. & Seif, E. (2011), Wiggins, G. & McTighe, J. (2013)

Unit Concept

```

graph TD
    UC[Universal Concept] --> UC2[Unit Concept]
    UC2 --> EU[Enduring Understandings]
    EU --> EQ[Essential Questions]
    EQ --> DU[Disciplinary Understandings]
    DU --> GQ[Guiding Questions]
  
```

Unit Concept

The application of the universal concept to the specific discipline – in this case, science.

This concept provides students with an organizational framework for connecting knowledge within the disciplines into a coherent view of the world and provides educators with a focus for unit planning.

Example: Observable Patterns in the Earth, Sun, Moon, & Stars

TN

Department of
Education

Professional Learning Package

Adapted from McTighe, J. & Seif, E. (2011), Wiggins, G. & McTighe, J. (2013)

Enduring Understandings and Essential Questions

```

graph TD
    UC[Universal Concept] --> UC2[Unit Concept]
    UC2 --> EU[Enduring Understandings]
    EU --> EQ[Essential Questions]
    EQ --> DU[Disciplinary Understandings]
    DU --> GQ[Guiding Questions]
  
```

Enduring Understandings

The ideas we want students to understand, not just recall, from deep exploration of our unit concept.

The enduring understandings reflect the abstract, easily misunderstood, "big" ideas of the discipline.

Example: Bodies in space move and change in appearance according to predictable patterns.

Essential Questions

Open-ended questions that guide students' exploration of the Enduring Understandings or "big" ideas of the discipline.

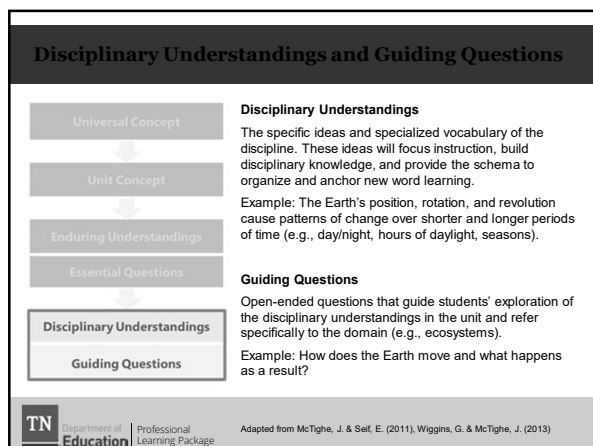
Example: How and why do bodies in space (Earth, sun, moon, stars) move and "change"?

TN

Department of
Education

Professional Learning Package

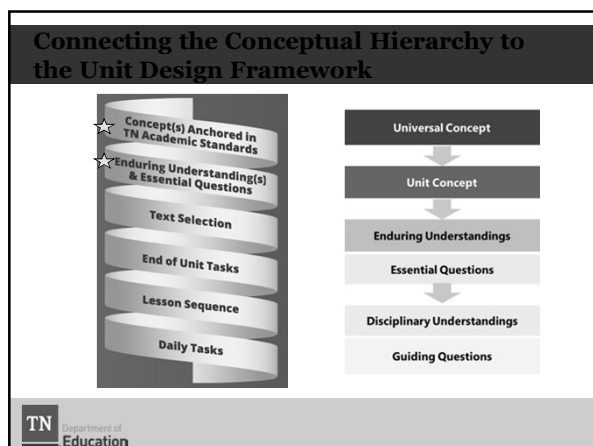
Adapted from McTighe, J. & Seif, E. (2011), Wiggins, G. & McTighe, J. (2013)



Conceptual Hierarchy Example

Universal Concept	Patterns
Unit Concept	Observable Patterns in the Earth, Sun, Moon, and Stars
Enduring Understanding	Observations over time help us detect, describe, and predict patterns of movement and change in bodies in space.
Essential Question	How do we know that bodies in space move and change? How can we tell?
Disciplinary understanding	Patterns in what we observe in the night sky are caused by movements and/or changing positions of the Earth and moon.
Guiding Questions	When and why does what we "see" (observe) in the night sky change?

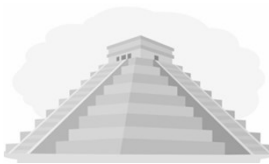
TN Department of Education Professional Learning Package



Connecting the Conceptual Hierarchy to the Unit Design Framework

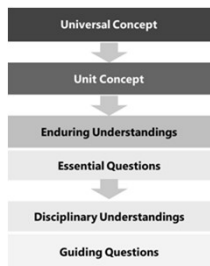
- **Enduring understandings** and **essential questions** are:
 - Inspired by the Tennessee Academic Standards
 - Explored through rich and complex texts
 - Developed through daily and end-of-unit tasks
- **Disciplinary understandings** and **guiding questions** are:
 - Supported by a purposeful sequence of lessons and readings
 - Organized in ways that build toward the enduring understandings and essential questions
 - Developed through daily and end-of-unit tasks

Conceptual Hierarchy



- Imagine you are explaining what a conceptual hierarchy is to a colleague who doesn't know what it means. Think of an image that helps describe it. Draw and label the image.

Conceptual Hierarchy



- Explore the Unit Starter you will use. Identify each part of the conceptual hierarchy:
 - Universal Concept
 - Unit Concept
 - Enduring Understandings & Essential Questions
 - Disciplinary Understandings & Guiding Questions
- Share the conceptual hierarchy for your unit with someone teaching a different unit. Describe the concepts and understandings in your own words.

Closing Reflection

- How is the organization of the Unit Starter similar or different from the unit framework you're using right now?
- How might the organization of the Unit Starter's concepts and understandings support increased student learning?
- What about the organization of the Unit Starter might be challenging for teachers and/or students?

Learning Session Summary

- In **Learning Session 2**, we addressed these questions:
 - How are concepts and understandings organized in the Unit Starter?
- In **Learning Session 3**, we will address these questions:
 - How are concepts and understandings supported by:
 - texts;
 - the end-of-unit task;
 - lesson sequences and daily tasks; and
 - daily question sequences for each reading?



**Learning to
Application**

Learning to Application

Prior to our next learning session:

- Complete **Question 1** in **Appendix A: Unit Preparation Protocol** (located in the back of the Unit Starter)

Appendix A: Unit Preparation Protocol

Question 1: What will students learn during my unit?

Review the content goals for the unit and identify the desired results for learners.


<ul style="list-style-type: none"> What are the concepts around which I will organize my unit (universal concepts, unit concepts)? What will students come to understand through deep exploration of these concepts (essential questions, enduring understandings)? What disciplinary knowledge will focus instruction and provide the schema for students to organize and anchor new words (guiding questions, disciplinary understandings)? Why is this content important for students to know? <p><small>*Adapted from McTighe, J. & Seif, K. (2011). Wiggins, G. & McTighe (2013).</small></p>	
--	--

TN Department of Education | Professional Learning Package

For Learning Session 3

- Bring copies of the Unit Starter texts to the next learning session.
- If not all texts are available, prioritize finding texts for the first week's interactive read aloud and shared reading lessons.

TN Department of Education | Professional Learning Package



Department of
Education

Districts and schools in Tennessee will exemplify excellence and equity such that all students are equipped with the knowledge and skills to successfully embark on their chosen path in life.

Excellence | Optimism | Judgment | Courage | Teamwork
